

Washington State Patrol

Chief John R. Batiste



“El Protector”

Annual Report

2004

Washington State Patrol

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Executive Summary

In 2003, the “El Protector” program was developed to address the increasing concern of Hispanic/Latino surnamed drivers being over-represented in fatal and felony collisions in Southeast Washington. The idea for the program came from the highly successful California Highway Patrol’s program. The program places special emphasis on people with limited English speaking abilities. In addition, this bilingual/bicultural program provides public education through dialogue in addition to traditional enforcement.

The program officially began on February 20, 2003, following a community meeting in Burbank, WA. In attendance that evening were a variety of Hispanic/Latino community leaders, state and local law enforcement officials, and members of state and national traffic safety organizations. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) facilitated a presentation that included statistics from all of the fatal collision in 2002. During this meeting, there was an overwhelming positive response and commitment from everyone to do something about this issue.

Listening to the community input, a citizen’s advisory board was developed and WSP created a trooper position to act as the “El Protector” to work full-time with the Hispanic/Latino community. The advisory board was designed to provide guidance, brainstorm ideas, participate in the shared goals and objectives, and to assist law enforcement in getting our traffic safety message into the targeted community. Trooper Rey Gomez was selected as Washington’s first El Protector, and worked in that capacity until his retirement in 2004. Trooper Oscar Garcia was selected as the El Protector and works directly with the Hispanic/Latino community.

Significant accomplishments for the year include: Continuing to build on partnerships with the community and the advisory board and the selection of Trooper Oscar Garcia as the new El Protector, community events, working in the fields, web-site development, program flyer development, bilingual coloring book development, becoming a member of the Tri-City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and working with the Spanish-speaking media, as well as English-speaking media.

In addition to the accomplishments, the program has remained consistently focused on reducing traffic-related deaths in 2004 and to 2003.



Captain David J. Karnitz
District Commander

Since the program started in 2003, it has made a significant impact on traffic-related deaths compared to 2002 especially during the harvest season in the Mid-Columbia Valley. In combination with the dedicated enforcement effort by the WSP troopers and local law enforcement in both the Tri-Cities and Walla Walla, the results were staggering:

	Total # Fatal Collisions	DUI Involved	Hispanic DUI Involved	Total # Felony Collisions	Total # Hispanic Felony Collisions	No Seatbelts	Total # of Deaths
2002	20	12	9	4	4	11	26
2003	12	5	2	0	0	3	12
2004	14	9	4	4	1	0	14

Of the four felony collisions in 2004, 25% of them involved Hispanic/Surnamed drivers. In addition, over 60% of all fatal collisions involved Hispanic/Latino surnamed drivers, with an average area population of 25-30%. In 2004, four of the fourteen fatal collisions involved Hispanic/Latino surnamed drivers. To celebrate how this program has taken hold, of the 20 deaths in 2002, 11 were during the fall harvest season. In 2003, there were no deaths during this same time period. In 2004, there were three during harvest season, which is considered between August and October. Through education provided by the El Protector, the support of the community and consistent enforcement, the numbers remain low.

We are extremely proud of the collaborative effort this program has enjoyed and without the direct work of all of our stakeholders, we would not have been as successful. We faced many new challenges and must continue to overcome social barriers to gain trust and to make this program work. In 2005, we face additional challenges and will continue to work together to make a difference in traffic safety.

El Protector

In my 6 1/2 year tenure with the Washington State Patrol, I have participated in the El Protector program and many Traffic Safety programs that address the immediate concern. However, none would compare with the accomplishments the El Protector made in 2003 and 2004. The most important and significant accomplishment was the reduction of traffic-related deaths. The El Protector Hispanic/Latino outreach program was developed to reach that segment of our community who would otherwise not be provided traffic safety information. It has made an extreme impact in our communities by reducing the number of people killed.

In addition to the El Protector Advisory Committee (EPAC), another sub-committee comprised mostly of Hispanic police officers was developed. These officers from local agencies work collectively under the umbrella of the El Protector Law



Enforcement Advisory Committee (LEAC). These officers and I were present at many Hispanic/Latino events and fiestas, and were able to overcome social/cultural barriers that existed through contact and dialogue. Another method used to reach the Hispanic/Latino community was to go out to the fruit orchards and fields. Each day during apple harvest, I addressed a group of 85-90 individuals and discussed traffic safety during their break periods. I found these people craved the information and the opportunity to speak to a police officer. Taking this opportunity shows that the WSP and law enforcement cares about their safety, building trust and long-term support.

The El Protector program has developed strong ties with local businesses, media groups and local government agencies. The media such as the Tri-City Herald, La Voz and Viva newspapers have been instrumental in delivering the safe driving message to the community.

The Tri-Cities also has a strong Spanish radio network with five FM stations and two AM stations that cover Yakima, Tri-Cities, Walla Walla and the Moses Lake/Quincy area. Recorded and live PSAs make it possible for the El Protector program to reach thousands of listeners at work, home and in their cars. Plans are currently being developed to increase the El Protector program's exposure through television.

A commercial, produced by Charter, getting the message across concerning the hazards of drinking and driving was broadcast on Univision. Television media groups such as Univision, Charter Media and KVEW Noticias Locales are very interested in producing more traffic safety messages in Spanish.

This program is also facilitating a weekly column in the Spanish newspapers where safety messages, issues, and concerns are being addressed.

The El Protector program has built a strong foundation for success. As a result of this groundwork, the program offers assistance to other WSP Bureaus and Divisions. The El Protector program provided assistance to the WSP Human Resource Division in recruiting efforts for diversification by attending career fair events. The Criminal Investigation Division (CID) has also asked for the assistance of the El Protector program with their criminal casework and warrant apprehension efforts. The wanted felons will be published in our weekly column with an opportunity for the public to call in a felon's location.

With the strong support of the WSP and the community, the El Protector program will continue to make strides in becoming the leader in the Hispanic/Latino outreach area, not only in the Tri-Cities/Walla Walla area, but also branching out to other communities.

Citizen Advisory Board

Throughout the year, the following committed individuals contributed many hours of donated time to the El Protector program:

Mr. Dave Cortinas – Mr. Cortinas is a native of Walla Walla. He is co-owner/publisher, along with his wife, Marty, of La Voz Hispanic Newspaper of Washington & Oregon. La Voz was founded in October 1995 and has its central offices in Pasco. Recently Mr. Cortinas was elected to the Grupo Mexico board, which is a statewide organization, organized by the Mexican Consulate in Seattle. Mr. Cortinas is a very active member of

the community, serving as the President of the Tri-City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, board member of the Hanford Advisory Board, board member of the Mid-Columbia Coalition for Children, and is the founder of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Action Committee.

Ms. Maria Vera – Ms. Vera is an innovative leader at Catholic Family & Child Services. She is Program Director for both the Community Resource Outreach Team (formerly with Success By Six) and the Child Abuse Prevention initiative's Parent Trust Program. Maria is a leader, advocate, and teacher in the areas of family support, education and programs that emphasize risk and protective factors for the purpose of prevention. She has a long history of creating successful collaborations that help identify both gaps in service as well as solutions. Maria consults at the local, state, and national levels and has been recognized for her work in engaging and empowering Latino families.

Ms. Theresa Quezada – Ms. Quezada's entire professional career has been devoted to the development of students, kindergarten through college. She is a graduate of Cal State Polytechnic University at Pomona, with a BA Degree in Liberal Arts, an emphasis in bilingual education, and a minor in Spanish. Her professional career includes teaching, college recruitment and graduation program development, corporate internship program management, and community partnership development. She is active on local boards and committees and volunteers her time to organizations such as Success by Six, Boy Scouts, and the Hispanic Outreach Leadership Alliance. She arrived in the Tri-Cities with her family in 1992 and worked for Westinghouse Hanford, Inc., and Fluor Hanford, Inc., managing education programs until her early retirement in December 2002. She is the sole proprietor of New Life Consulting and through it she continues to help students develop and strengthen their leadership skills.

Ms. Lucy Cartagena – Ms. Cartagena is currently the Human Resource Manager for Broetje Orchards. She also works directly with employees, supervisors, and manages all aspects of safety, personnel issues, workers' compensation, and employee benefits. She has been with Broetje Orchards for eight years. She holds a BS Degree in Social Sciences from Washington State University. In her spare time, Lucy volunteers for CONTACT Help-line, a crisis hotline in the Tri-Cities.

Ms. Eva Madrigal – Ms. Madrigal is Director of Snake River Housing, Inc. and the Community Development Program. Snake River Housing houses Broetje Orchard employees. She has worked at Broetje Orchards since 1981 in various areas of the company and has been Director of Housing and the Community Development Program for the last six years. Eva was born in Mexico and grew up as a migrant worker in the States of Washington, Oregon, California and Utah.

Mr. Rick Contreras – Mr. Contreras was born in Calexico, California, a small border town along the Baja California peninsula. He was raised there until joining the Air Force upon graduation from Vincent Memorial High School. He served in the military from July 1982 - June 1986 with the 96th Bomb Wing at Dyess Air Force base in Abilene, Texas as a security specialist. After separating from the service, Rick attended Imperial Valley College receiving his Associates Degree in liberal arts. Rick has been in broadcast advertising since 1994 and is currently employed by Butterfield Broadcasting as their sales manager for the Tri-Cities DMA. Last year Rick received his CRMC from the Radio Advertising Bureau, one of only a handful of certified radio marketing consultants in the area.

Mr. Randall Grady – Mr. Grady is an Account Executive at KVEW-ABC TV. He holds a BA Degree in Communications/Advertising from Washington State University. He has worked for the Lewiston Morning Tribune in Lewiston, Idaho from 1973 - 1985, and the Tri-City Herald from 1985 - 1998. In addition, he taught and advised marketing classes at Columbia Basin College in Pasco since 1997 and joined the advertising staff at KVEW TV in 2002 as an Account Executive.

Law Enforcement Partners:

Chief Raul Almedia – Mabton Police Department (Yakima Valley “El Protector”)

Captain Gary Bainter – Walla Walla Police Department

Captain Bill White – Walla Walla County Sheriff’s Office

Sergeant Ron Sabin – Benton County Sheriff’s Office

Officer Miguel Sanchez - Walla Walla Police Department

Ms. Nancy Walters – WTSC Regional Coordinator, Walla Walla

Ms. Lynda Lou West – WTSC Regional Coordinator, Tri-Cities



2004 Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Mission

To create an outreach program that addresses DUI and occupant protection education, built in collaboration with community stakeholders.

Goals

1. Reduce the number of fatality collisions involving Hispanic/Latino drivers/occupants.
2. Reduce the number of felony collisions involving Hispanic/Latino drivers/occupants.
3. Reduce the number of Hispanic/Latino community members injured or killed as a result of failing to use vehicle occupant restraint equipment.
4. Evolve the program to address all traffic safety issues within the Hispanic/Latino community.

Action Plan

1. Create a standardized training program in all four Field Operations Bureau (FOB) core mission elements in Spanish (DUI, Occupant Restraints, Speed, and Aggressive Driving).
2. Expand Hispanic/Latino community partnerships.
3. Develop Hispanic/Latino and general media partnerships.
4. Involve the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission.
5. Create a statewide information exchange within the Hispanic/Latino community.
6. Outreach to orchards, businesses, community groups and local schools.
7. Partner with other law enforcement agencies to accomplish our goals.
8. Attend and communicate at community activities.

Barriers to Entry

- Skepticism that a state governmental agency can bring together all of the necessary resources in a community to address this issue.
- Long term financial commitment to a sustained effort.
- The common fear of law enforcement.
- Lack of commitment from stakeholders.
- Continual population fluctuation and migration in the Hispanic/Latino community.
- Language, social, and cultural differences.



The goals and objective listed above were all accomplished with the assistance of many people in our community. They worked with every WSP district to come up with a training message; we attended many community events and made individual contact with key leaders of the community; we joined the Tri-City Chamber of Commerce and gave several presentations to them; we created a media sub-committee to work with all media and created public service announcements in partnership with our own Government and Media Relations group, Charter Media Cable, Radio Zorro, La Voz Hispanic newspaper, and KVEW-ABC; we invited the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, and they accepted an invitation to participate in our program by providing educational guidance and miscellaneous funding for printing costs; we built relationships with Mr. Gabriel Portugal, who is on the Governor's Commission for Hispanic Affairs, by attending his community functions and appearing on his live radio talk show; in attendance at our community meeting were leaders in the Hispanic/Latino community that included the Counsel General from the Mexican Counselee in Seattle; we worked with Broetje Orchards and brought our program to their fields for our first "hands-on training," and two of their employees are on our advisory board; finally, we worked side by side with our allied law enforcement agencies, including them in decision- making and in all of our publications.

We overcame all of the barriers that we outlined going into the year because of our unwavering commitment to working with our community and allowing Trooper Garcia and Gomez to form relationships built around trust. In addition, we attended every event we were asked to participate in and provided material in Spanish that we created to open up positive dialog.

	2002	2003	2004
# of Presentations	0	58	119
# of Personal Contacts	0	2000	9950
# of Media Contacts	4	45	77

Goals for 2005

The "El Protector" program in District Three will continue to work with community stakeholders to collaborate in the execution of our educational outreach program for the Hispanic/Latino community. The program will focus on collision-causing violations and occupant protection issues to include: DUI, Occupant Restraints, Speed, and Aggressive Driving as it relates to fatality, felony and injury collisions.

1. Provide education through training and information on traffic safety issues affecting the Hispanic/Latino Community in District Three.

A. Program introduction and training to area groups and businesses

1. Distribute traffic safety-related information
2. Write letters
3. Follow-up calls to larger groups and businesses
4. Develop training aids and static displays

B. Attend major community events

1. Cinco de Mayo
2. 16th of September

- C. *Partner with detectives and troopers to conduct post-collision follow-up with family, friends, and co-workers of collision victims.*
 - D. *Cultural awareness classes in partnership with the District Court*
 - 1. *Coordinate classes with Benton/Franklin County Prosecutors*
 - E. *Youth Mentoring Program*
- 2. Improve media outlets to communicate a common and consistent message.**
 - A. *Weekly newspaper columns in LaVoz and Viva Hispanic newspapers*
 - B. *Weekly El Protector messages on traffic safety with the major radio stations*
 - C. *Development of television public service announcements*
 - 1. *Charter Media/Univision/WSP/PS Media*
 - D. *Acquire billboard for advertisement of the program.*
- 3. Continue to develop and improve El Protector Program communication both internally and externally.**
 - D. *Quarterly meetings with Community Advisory Group*
 - E. *Squad room bulletin board – El Protector section*
 - F. *Attend Troopers’ meetings*
 - G. *Maintain and update web page*
 - H. *Year-end report to stakeholders and WSP*
 - I. *Assist with program expansion throughout District 3*
- 4. Recruiting to build a diverse foundation for the Law Enforcement.**
 - A. *Partner with Human Resource Division*
 - 1. *Recruiting*